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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 01/05/10

INDEX:

- 1) Top headlines
- 2) Editorials
- 3) Prime Minister's daily schedule (Nikkei)

Futenma relocation:

- 4) Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano to visit Okinawa (Nikkei)
- 5) DPJ's Yamaoka hints Futenma decision could come after May (Nikkei)
- 6) Ishiba to visit Washington (Tokyo Shimbun)
- 7) Communist Party head Shii raps postponement of Futenma decision (Asahi)

Foreign relations:

- 8) Hatoyama says it's not yet the right time to visit North Korea (Nikkei)
- 9) Japan, Turkey to cooperate in provision of aid to Afghanistan (Asahi)
- 10) Imai named Taiwan representative; exchange association announced (Mainichi)

Secret accords:

- 11) MOFA internal investigation fails to uncover more documents relating to secret Japan-U.S. accords (Nikkei)

Economy:

- 12) JAL chooses Delta as partner with the aim of long-term growth (Yomiuri)
- 13) New Tourism Minister sets goal of 10 million foreign visitors during his two-year term (Nikkei)

Politics:

- 14) Regular Diet session to convene on Jan. 18; July 11 likely date for Upper House election (Sankei)
- 15) Tanigaki demands cabinet resign en masse (Asahi)
- 16) Hatoyama eager to thoroughly establish political leadership (Yomiuri)
- 17) Police to begin questioning of major contractors about land purchase by Ozawa's fund management group (Tokyo Shimbun)

Defense & security:

- 18) Police to build a case against service member involved in hit-and-run incident resulting in death (Tokyo Shimbun)
- 19) Yomitan residents demand SOFA revisions (Tokyo Shimbun)
- 20) Govt. examining donation of patrol boat to Yemen (Yomiuri)

Articles:

- 1) TOP HEADLINES
- TOP HEADLINES

Asahi:

National health insurance association receives undisclosed state subsidies totaling 22.9 billion yen

Mainichi:

42 prefectures have no stockpiles of protective masks for asbestos

Yomiuri:

Government eyeing restrictions on parental rights to prevent child abuse

TOKYO 00000015 002 OF 009

Nikkei:

Honda to use local steel for car production in India

Sankei:

Hatoyama's first speech of the year: Passing budgets top priority

Tokyo Shimbun:

Prosecutors to question concerned general contractors' executives over donation scandal involving Ozawa

Akahata:

In first party convention of year, Chairman Shii emphasizes need for JCP to make large gains in Upper House election

2) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

- (1) Rebuild system of political leadership
- (2) Add more substance to new growth strategy

Mainichi:

- (1) 2010 as year of reconstruction - economy: Don't be defeated by mental deflation

Yomiuri:

- (1) Global economy still facing challenges

Nikkei:

- (1) Promote pension reform, with inauguration of new body as momentum
- (2) Security situation in Yemen deteriorating further

Sankei:

- (1) Hatoyama's New Year's press conference: Demonstrate leadership
- (2) New pension body: Restore confidence with customer-friendly services

Tokyo Shimbun:

- (1) Is dawn approaching for Japan?

Akahata:

- (1) Japanese economy in 2010: Let's pave the way for sound development

3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, January 4

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

09:02 Delivered New Year message at DPJ headquarters on first day of work; met Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa, Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Kenji Yamaoka, DPJ Secretary General in the Upper House Yoshimitsu Takashima, and Administration Committee Chairman Tenzo Okumura

10:00 Held New Year news conference at Prime Minister's Official Residence; met National Strategy Minister Naoto Kan, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Koji Matsui; joined by Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoriyoshi Matsuno
11:10 Left JR Tokyo Station on Nozomi-23 train, accompanied by State

TOKYO 00000015 003 OF 009

Minister for Abduction Issue Hiroshi Nakai, Administration Reform Minister Yoshito Sengoku, and Prime Minister's assistants Yoshikatsu Nakayama and Katsuya Ogawa

12:51 Arrived at JR Nagoya Station; met by Nagoya Mayor Takashi Kawamura and JR Tokai Chairman Noriyuki Kasai

12:57 Met Kawamura and others at VIP room of Kintetsu Nagoya Station

13:10 Left Nagoya Station on Kintetsu limited express train

14:34 Arrived at Kintetsu Ujiyamada Station; met by Mie Governor Akihiko Noro

14:53 Arrived at Ise Shrine in Ise City, Mie Prefecture; prayed at Outer Shrine of Ise

15:34 Prayed at Inner Shrine of Ise

16:22 Received flowers from 7th Corps of Ise, Boy Scout Association of Japan and 1st Corps of Mie Prefecture Girl Scout Association of Japan in front of the office of the Board of Ise Grand Shrines

16:53 Left Ujiyamada Station on Kintetsu limited express train

18:16 Arrived at Kintetsu Nagoya Station

18:22 Met Kasai and others at VIP room of JR Nagoya Station

18:39 Left Nagoya Station on Nozomi-382 train

20:20 Arrived at JR Tokyo Station

20:37 Had dinner with Hirano at Japanese restaurant Yamazato in Hotel Okura

23:06 Arrived at his official residential quarters

4) Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano to visit Okinawa

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano will visit Okinawa Prefecture on Jan. 8-10 to discuss the Issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station. He is expected to visit U.S. military bases and other places in the prefecture. At a Tokyo hotel last evening, he exchanged views with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on the relocation of the Futenma base and other issues. He said to Hatoyama, "I would like you to let me handle" the Futenma issue.

5) Futenma conclusion might be postponed beyond May: DPJ's Yamaoka

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has said that he expects to reach a conclusion on the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in May. With regard to this, Kenji Yamaoka, chairman of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Diet Affairs Committee, said on a BS Asahi program yesterday, "Taking more time to think about it could also be a conclusion," indicating that there is a possibility that the conclusion will be postponed.

6) Ishiba leaves for U.S.

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

LDP Policy Research Council Chairman Ishiba will visit the U.S. from Jan. 5 to 8. In Washington he will discuss the issue of Futenma airfield relocation with the Obama administration's Assistant Secretary of State Campbell (East Asian and Pacific Affairs) and Assistant Secretary of Defense Gregson. In preparation for debate in the regular Diet session he will reconfirm the Obama

TOKYO 00000015 004 OF 009

administration's recognition of the contribution to security of the stationing of U.S. forces including Marines on Okinawa. He will be accompanied by Policy Research Council Deputy Chairman Yoshimasa Hayashi and Vice Deputy Chairman Yasutoshi Nishimura.

7) JCP Chairman Shii criticizes postponement of Futenma conclusion

AKAHATA (Page 4) (Full)
January 5, 2010

Japanese Communist Party (JCP) Chairman Kazuo Shii yesterday delivered a speech at the New Year's opening of the party's organ, Akahata, at party headquarters. During the speech, he said, "I would like to make this year into an epoch-making year for forming a majority group calling for abolishing the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty by giving rise to a great national debate questioning the appropriateness of the treaty. I also want to aim at removing the military bases from Okinawa and Japan." With the House of Councillors election this summer in mind, he clarified his party's stance of opposing the Japan-U.S. alliance.

Shii criticized the Hatoyama administration for postponing a conclusion on the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa Prefecture until May. He said, "(The government) keeps repeating its commotion and wavering. The people's anxiety will not change no matter where (the base) is relocated."

8) Hatoyama: It is too early to visit North Korea

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama yesterday expressed his perception of the issue of North Korea's abductions of Japanese nationals, by saying, "I will consider visiting North Korea when the time is ripe and when such a trip becomes truly necessary. The timing is not right yet." He made this comment in response to questions by reporters in Ise City, Mie Prefecture.

9) Okada, Turkey FM agree on cooperation in Afghan aid

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
January 5, 2010

Kurashige, Ankara

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, now visiting Turkey, met with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu on the afternoon of Jan. 4, local time. They agreed that the two countries should hold vice minister-level talks on aid for Afghanistan and also should cooperate in persuading Iran to discontinue its nuclear development program.

Okada briefed Davutoglu on Japan's decision to extend up to 5 billion dollars, or approximately 450 billion yen, mainly in civilian aid to Afghanistan over five years. He then suggested that Japan and Turkey should start discussing specific cooperative efforts.

Davutoglu praised Japan's aid package, remarking it was the right decision. He said that Turkey has dispatched 1,700 troops to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. They

TOKYO 00000015 005 OF 009

affirmed the importance of assistance by the two countries in improving the security situation in Afghanistan.

10) Imai appointed new de facto ambassador to Taiwan

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

The Interchange Association, Japan, the body in charge of Japan's relations with Taiwan, appointed Tadashi Imai, 65, former Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) ambassador to Okinawa, as the new chief of its office in Taipei (with the rank of ambassador) on Jan. 4. Imai joined MOFA in 1969. He was formerly an ambassador to Malaysia and has served in other senior positions. His predecessor Masaki Saito's remark in a speech last May that "the international status of Taiwan is unresolved" became a political issue, forcing him to step down from his post.

11) Documents on secret nuclear pact not found

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

It was learned yesterday that the Foreign Ministry's internal investigation team has failed to find documents on the secret Japan-U.S. agreement on nuclear introduction. There is a possibility that the documents were discarded in the fear that they would be discovered. The ministry's handling of documents will likely be called into question.

With regard to the handover of the documents, former Administrative Vice Minister Ryohei Murata clearly stated in an interview with the Nihon Keizai Shimbun that he handed over to his successor a piece of paper stipulating the contents of the secret pact. Also former Ambassador to the Netherlands Kazuhiko Tojo, who served as director general of the Treaties Bureau (currently the International Legal Affairs Bureau), testified that he handed over five volumes of documents regarding the secret pact to his successor when he was bureau chief.

The ministry's internal investigation team has failed to find any of the documents on which Murata and Togo testified.

The committee of experts, chaired by University of Tokyo Prof. Shinichi Kitaoka, that was set up by Foreign Ministry Katsuya Okada questioned Togo about the circumstances when the documents were prepared, but it is still unknown when the documents were lost.

12) JAL to tie up with Delta Air Lines, attaching importance to mid- to long-term growth

YOMIURI (Page 9) (Lead para.)
January 5, 2010

Japan Airlines (JAL) and the state-backed Enterprise Turnaround Initiative Corporation of Japan will likely decide that the air carrier will form a business and capital tie-up with Delta Air Lines of the U.S. This is because they attach importance to a mid- to long-term growth strategy in their envisioned scenario for rebuilding JAL. Switching airline alliances to the SkyTeam, to which Delta belongs, would enable the carrier to dramatically expand its international flight network. In the meantime, American Airlines

TOKYO 00000015 006 OF 009

will likely be pressed to take a second look at its strategy for the Japan-U.S. flight route, which could change the power distribution of air carriers in Asia.

Once JAL and Delta Air Lines formally join hands, division of labor will become possible between them with Delta mainly operating on the Pacific route and Japan operating on the Asian routes. They will thus be able to prioritize the distribution of management resources.

As a result, the efficiency of their flight operations will be enhanced. Flight routes from the U.S. to Asian destinations via Japan will also increase. A related source said that Asia-bound U.S. passengers as well as passengers from Japan will increase, offering

the potential for improved seat occupancy on JAL flights.

13) New Japan Tourism Agency commissioner in press conference:
"Foreign visitors should be increased to 10 million annually"

NIKKEI (Page 5) (Excerpt)
January 5, 2010

In his first press conference after assuming the post yesterday, Japan Tourism Agency Commissioner Hiroshi Mizohata, 49, said: "I hope that the number of foreign visitors to Japan will increase to more than 10 million annually" during his term of office for two years. The number of foreign visitors is estimated to have dropped below 7 million in 2009. Focusing on the fact that 70 PERCENT of foreign visitors visit major cities, the new commissioner indicated that the agency will focus on preparing major cities to receive foreign visitors. The agency will provide advice to municipal governments in order to enhance their capabilities for attracting foreign visitors.

14) Regular Diet session to be convened on the 18th: Upper House election likely to be held on July 11

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 5, 2010

The government and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) on Jan. 4 decided to convene the regular Diet session on the 18th. The session will run for 150 days until June 16. Article 32 of the Public Offices Election Law stipulates that an Upper House election be held within 30 days after the Diet is adjourned. As such, it is now likely that the summer Upper House election will be officially announced on June 24 and held on July 11.

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on the morning of the 4th met with DPJ Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa and Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Kenji Yamaoka at the party headquarters and confirmed a policy of convening the Diet session on the 18th. Yamaoka on the same day met with Lower House Speaker Takahiro Yokomichi and Vice Speaker Seishiro Eto separately in the Diet building and conveyed this policy. The government and the DPJ plan to hold a meeting of the Diet Affairs Committee chairmen of the ruling and opposition parties on the 7th and decide on the timetable on the 8th, after obtaining consensus from each party.

The government and the ruling parties during the upcoming regular Diet session intend to have the Diet pass the fiscal 2009 second extra budget in January and then do their utmost to realize the Diet

TOKYO 00000015 007 OF 009

passage of the fiscal 2010 budget bill within the current fiscal year.

15) LDP President Tanigaki to call for resignation en masse or Diet dissolution

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
January 5, 2010

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President Sadakazu Tanigaki on Jan. 4 visited Ise Shrine in Ise City, Mie Prefecture. He noted after the visit, "We must pursue the politics and money issue so as to seek the people's mandate through the resignation of the cabinet or the dissolution (of the Lower House)." He thus indicated a stance of pursuing the political funds issue involving Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa during the upcoming regular Diet session.

He said that the Upper House election in the summer will be a crucial political battle. In the meantime, regarding the line between victory and defeat, he steered clear of making any categorical comment, by just saying, "We will do everything within our power to achieve victory."

16) Hatoyama indicates resolve to establish system of political leadership in policy speech

In his first press conference of the year yesterday, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said that the government would submit a bill to establish a political leadership system to the upcoming ordinary Diet session, which is scheduled to be convened on Jan. 18. He thus indicated his eagerness to promulgate the policy of shifting policymaking responsibility from bureaucrats to politicians. Hatoyama hopes to display specific results prior to the House of Councillors election this summer.

Gist of the bill to establish a political leadership system

Q Upgrade the National Policy Unit to a national policy bureau and make it a legally endorsed organization.

Q Increase the number of senior vice ministers and parliamentary secretaries. Establish the post of ministerial secretary.

Q Set up a cabinet personnel bureau to consolidate personnel matters of senior officials at each government office under the leadership of the cabinet.

Q Abolish the system of allowing bureaucrats to make Diet replies.

Q Set up hearing commissions to listen to opinions from bureaucrats and experts in the Upper and Lower Houses.

Q Remove the status of government special assistant from the Cabinet Legislation Bureau director general and prohibit the person in the post from making Diet replies.

17) Public prosecutors to question general construction contractors over their political funds donation to DPJ Secretary General Ozawa

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Top play) (lead para.)
January 5, 2010

In connection with the purchase of land in Setagaya Ward, Tokyo, by

TOKYO 00000015 008 OF 009

Rikuzan-kai, Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa's fund-management organization, the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office appears to have decided to question sources connected with several general construction contractors, including a former executive of the Tohoku branch of Kajima Corporation, a leading general construction contractor located in Minato Ward, Tokyo, starting on Jan. 5. There are still unclear aspects about the flow of funds for the purchase of the land in question. Public prosecutors appear to have decided that it is necessary to question sources related to general construction contractors that have been donating political funds to Ozawa.

18) Papers on U.S. Army staff sergeant, suspect in fatal hit-and-run incident in Yomitan, Okinawa, last November, sent to prosecutors

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 31) (Abridged)
January 5, 2010

In connection with the fatal hit-and-run incident in Yomitan Village, Okinawa, the Okinawa Prefectural Police sent papers on Clyde Gunn, 27, a member of the U.S. Army's special force Green Berets at the Torii Communication Station (in Yomitan) to the prosecutors on Jan. 4 on the charge of negligent driving resulting in death for hitting a man fatally in Yomitan. Investigators will continue to build a case against the suspect for violation of the Road Traffic Law (hit-and-run) and a charge will be filed when investigations are completed.

It is believed that the Okinawa police went ahead to indict Gunn for negligent driving resulting in death, on which adequate evidences have been gathered, in order to facilitate filing a charge of hit-and-run at an early date. Investigations on the latter offense have been stuck due to Gunn's refusal to make himself available for questioning. With the first charge being filed, the deadlocked investigation will now move forward. Gunn is expected to be handed over to the Japanese authorities after indictment based on the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement.

In light of the indictment, Gunn's lawyer said: "He will present himself to the police as soon as Jan. 5, but we will continue to demand the interrogation be videotaped." There is a possibility that Gunn may refuse interrogation again.

According to the Okinawa police, after the incident occurred on Nov. 7, Gunn responded to questioning on a voluntary basis at first, but refused to appear for questioning after Nov. 14, demanding "videotaping" of the interrogation process. While he has told his lawyer "I think I hit the man," he denied the hit-and-run charge, saying: "I have been trained as an army medic and have the knowledge and skills of lifesaving. It is impossible that I would have fled."

19) Okinawans demand SOFA revision in reaction to indictment of U.S. Army staff sergeant in fatal hit-and-run incident in Yomitan last November

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 31) (Full)
January 5, 2010

In light of the indictment without arrest of the U.S. Army staff sergeant, the suspect in the fatal hit-and-run incident in Yomitan Village, Okinawa, who had refused to appear for police questioning, people in Okinawa pointed out the problem with the Japan-U.S. Status

TOKYO 00000015 009 OF 009

of Forces Agreement (SOFA) on Jan. 4 and demanded the revision of the agreement.

Morihide Nakasone, 53, a company employee who lives in Yomitan, observed that, "Both hair and blood were found on the staff sergeant's car. If he were a Japanese, he would have been arrested immediately, but he is able to get away because of SOFA." He pointed to the fact that even though the U.S. forces urged the staff sergeant to appear for questioning, he refused to do so, and stressed the need to revise SOFA, asserting that, "Both the Japanese and U.S. sides are fettered by SOFA."

Hiroji Yamashiro, 57, Okinawa Peace Movement Center's secretary general, said: "The people of Okinawa constantly fear that if they get involved in an accident with U.S. military personnel and these people flee to the bases that will be the end of the matter. There have been cases where people have let a matter drop without receiving compensation. SOFA should be revised so that (U.S. military personnel) are subject to the same judicial procedures (as Japanese)."

20) Japan mulling providing patrol boat to Yemen for anti-piracy operations

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)
January 5, 2010

The government has begun to consider providing a 30-meter-class patrol boat (costing approximately 1 billion yen) to Yemen, which is located across (the Gulf of Aden) from Somalia, for anti-piracy operations in waters off Somalia. It will use grants under official development assistance (ODA) funds for this purpose in order to enhance the law enforcement capability of the coast guard of Yemen, which has a coastline of some 2,500 kilometers along the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. Japan plans to hand over the patrol boat in 2012 at the earliest.

Since a patrol boat is classified as "weapon," the government will ask Yemen to sign an official document pledging: (1) to limit the use of the patrol boat to anti-piracy operations; and (2) not to transfer the patrol boat to a third party without the Japanese government's approval, in order to make this an exception to the "three principles on arms exports," which prohibit the export of weapons to a foreign country.

ROOS